United Nations A/69/421–S/2014/715

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
3 October 2014
English
Original: Arabic

General Assembly
Sixty-ninth session
Agenda item 64 (a)
Promotion and protection of the rights of children: promotion and protection of the rights of children

Security Council
Sixty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 2 October 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I wish to transmit the position of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic concerning a heinous terrorist attack crime targeting innocent children who were leaving a school complex in the Ikrimah quarter of Homs city.

The armed terrorist groups have committed yet another crime against innocent children. The victims were leaving a school complex in the Ikrimah quarter of Homs city. The attack killed 33 civilians, 22 of them children, and injured 102, most of whom were also children. The school also sustained significant damage. The incident took place on 1 October 2014. A terrorist planted an explosive device in front of the new Ikrimah school. Minutes later, he detonated himself using an explosive belt in front of the Ikrimah al-Makhzumi primary school in an attempt to kill the greatest possible number of pupils and their families.

The available information indicates that the two terrorist bombings were planned and executed by the terrorist groups which the Western States and their regional proxies enthusiastically refer to as the "moderate armed opposition".

The killing of innocent children and other civilians can have no justification. Yet the international community, as represented by the United Nations, has not condemned the crimes of the armed terrorist groups. Nor has it spoken out against the recent terrorist attacks on schools. The latest incident was but one example; others include the targeting of the Badruldin al-Husayni Faculty of Legal Sciences, the Darulsalam School and the Manar School. Failure to condemn those acts has merely emboldened the terrorist groups to carry out further atrocities.

Certain States distinguish between a moderate and an immoderate armed opposition. That distinction reflects a fundamentally illogical and wrong-headed approach to the terrorist proliferation facing today's world. For three years, Syria

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has warned that certain States have adopted double standards in their response to terrorism. They have armed, funded, harboured and trained terrorist groups under various pretexts, such as support for the moderate armed opposition. That practice must stop; it amounts to a standing invitation for terrorist groups to wreak destruction and murder, slaughtering schoolchildren and other innocent civilians. All of the aforementioned crimes against Syria's children and people were carried out by what is known as the moderate armed opposition, for which Saudi Arabia has said that it will open training camps. Those crimes range from massacring civilians to eating their hearts and livers. They have taken place in full view of global public opinion.

The murder of schoolchildren in Homs encapsulates the ideology and modus operandi of the terrorist groups, who have directed their hatred and lawlessness at Syria's children, and not for the first time. On another occasion, terrorist groups struck against children under the age of three, when fictitious health-care agencies belonging to the armed terrorist groups conspired with the Turkish authorities to cause a humanitarian disaster that claimed the lives of 15 innocent Syrian children, who had been given expired and poisoned vaccinations for measles. Dozens of other innocent children suffered asphyxiation.

These acts of terrorism are part of a series of recent bombings and terrorist crimes in Syrian cities. Funded, armed, trained and harboured by certain States in the region and beyond, the groups have struck repeatedly. They shelled residential areas 1,887 times in August and September alone, killing 296 civilians and injuring 1,487 others, including women and children.

The Security Council has adopted several pertinent resolutions under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) prohibits terrorism and its financing, freezes the assets of terrorist groups and individuals, declares the perpetrators and providers of funding to be criminals, and obliges States to refrain from providing any form of support or safe haven. Security Council resolution 2170 (2014) tackles Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, the Nusrah Front and other individuals, groups, institutions and entities associated with Al-Qaida, and addresses the threat posed by their destructive ideology. Security Council resolution 2178 (2014) provides for the interception and prosecution of foreign terrorist fighters. The position of those resolutions regarding such terrorist acts is clear: specific measures are invoked against the perpetrators and those who support and fund them.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic once again calls on the Security Council to take a clear stance on this and other crimes committed by armed terrorist groups and, in accordance with its counter-terrorism resolutions, to condemn the Homs attacks in the strongest possible terms.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 64 (a), and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative